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William Talbot and Church Parties 1688 – 1730

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Abstract

The High and Low Church parties in the early eighteenth century Church of England have been assumed by historians to be exclusive and homogenous groups. However the life and career of Bishop William Talbot, as with a number of other clergy, raises questions about these assumptions. Though Talbot was ostensibly a Latitudinarian Whig, he embraced some clear High Church principles, including those on the Trinity and on the sacerdotal nature of the priesthood. Talbot also repeatedly opposed the idea of a split between High and Low Churchmen, which had its origin in political abuse rather than theological principle. This study of Talbot's thought suggests that churchmen were able to embrace both High and Low Church principles and thus demands a reconceptualisation of the presumption of exclusivity in the two parties. Historians therefore need to revise their views of the Church parties in the early eighteenth century and to recognise that they existed as overlapping and complementary tendencies around Anglican core values rather than exclusive and opposing bi-polar strictures.

WILLIAM TALBOT & CHURCH PARTIES 1688-1730

The assumption of a homogeneity of ecclesiology and doctrine among High and Low Churchmen in the quarter-century after 1688, still so strongly assumed in historical studies of the Church of England, has been questioned recently. Early and mid-twentieth century Church historians such as Norman Sykes, Edward Carpenter, A. T. Hart, and some more recent authors, treated High Churchmen and Low Churchmen as distinct and separate.¹ It has been argued that High Church and Low Church were simply different terms for Tory and Whig.² One recent writer has suggested that High Churchmen were for monarchical authority and for conservatism in the Church whereas Low Churchmen were for religious pluralism and change in the Church.³ The tensions over the Occasional Conformity Bills of 1702-05, the Convocation controversy, the Sacheverell trial and Bangorian crisis appeared to place High and Low Church adherents so completely on different sides that this assumption had a logic and coherence. But recent studies have challenged the homogeneity and exclusivity of High and Low Churchmen.⁴ These studies engage indirectly with questions regarding the mutability of ‘orthodoxy’ in the Church of England. Roger Lund has argued that definitions of orthodoxy changed over time. He also suggested that ‘unbelief’ – atheism, deism and freethinking – was complex, multi-faceted and ambiguous.⁵ Why then should not belief share those characteristics? J.G.A. Pocock has also argued that the Church’s commitment to both scripture and reason in the post-Restoration era created a tension that led to doctrinal ambiguity.⁶ Lund and Pocock challenge the kind of assumptions of consistency and homogeneity behind A.M.C. Waterman’s view of orthodox Anglican Christology, ecclesiology and civil polity.⁷ If doctrinal fluidity defined Anglicanism, can strands within the Church be expected to be more solid and unambiguous? In fact High and Low Churchmanship have been increasingly viewed as blurred tendencies with overlapping doctrinal positions and important points of commonality and consensus. This has a

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consequence for ideas of orthodoxy. Previously Anglican doctrinal orthodoxy was treated as if it stood in the centre ground, with High Churchmen on one side tending toward heterodox Sacerdotalism and the Non-jurors, and Low Churchmen on the other leaning towards Latitudinarianism, Socinianism and Deism. But if the ultra-Latitudinarian Hoadly is judged orthodox in matters of Christology, a key indicator of heterodoxy, and if the ultra-Altitudinarian Smalridge is judged heterodox in Trinitarianism, ideas of such a continuum of High Church-Orthodox-Low Church break down. Like High and Low Churchmanship, Anglican orthodoxy may no longer be a homogeneous, immutable and coherent notion. A central question is how exceptional were those High Churchmen, like Smalridge, who embraced Latitudinarian attitudes, and Low Churchmen, like Hoadly, who displayed some marked High Church values. Evidence that Hoadly and Smalridge were not alone comes from a detailed study of William Talbot, successively Dean of Worcester, and Bishop of Oxford, Salisbury and Durham, from 1691 to 1730. Talbot has been written off as a partisan Whig Low Churchman; his displacement of George Hickes, the Non-juror, at Worcester alone established him as an opponent of High Churchmen.⁸ Yet Talbot, though he displayed many of the characteristics of a traditional Whig Latitudinarian, also embraced some of the doctrines and values of High Churchmanship, and consistently rejected the High Church-Low Church dichotomy.

A central problem of such a study is the use of the terms ‘High’ and ‘Low’ Churchmanship, ‘Latitudinarianism’ – and perhaps even ‘Whig’ and ‘Tory.’ Since the thesis of this article is that these terms have been abused and distorted by historians, and were far more fluid and permeable than previously thought, can they be used in any meaningful way? While there is doubt about the denomination and value of such terms, their currency in the discourse of the early eighteenth century is unquestioned. The use of the language employed by the churchmen of the early eighteenth century does not debase the argument that they were not the immutable and exclusive categories for which historians have mistaken them.

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William Talbot was a kinsman of Charles Talbot, later Duke of Shrewsbury, and one of those who issued the invitation to William of Orange to come to England in 1688. Eight years before the Revolution William Talbot had graduated from Oxford and had been granted the living of Burghfield in Berkshire by the Duke. But in the wake of the Revolution and the ejection of Non-jurors from their sees and livings, dependable men were sought to replace them. Some, like William Beveridge, had scruples about replacing Non-jurors, and therefore the clergy who succeeded to vacant sees and livings in 1691 were usually reckoned to be among the most convinced supporters of the Revolution.⁹ Hence Thomas Tenison replaced Archbishop William Sancroft; Simon Patrick replaced Francis Turner at Ely; John Moore replaced William Lloyd at Norwich –all three were hard line Whig Latitudinarians. Lower down the hierarchy William Talbot was called upon to replace George Hickes, Dean of Worcester. Hickes, who was to become one of the most aggressive Non-jurors and was irregularly consecrated Non-juror Bishop of Thetford in 1694, protested strongly against Talbot’s appointment, fixing a notice of his legal right to the decanal stall in Worcester Cathedral on Talbot’s arrival on 20 June 1691.¹⁰ Nevertheless Talbot quickly proved to be a firm favourite as a preacher before William and Mary.¹¹ In 1699 he was nominated by William III to the bishopric of Oxford and was consecrated on 24 September 1699, retaining his deanery *in commendam*.¹² Talbot does not appear to have been popular at Worcester; he was lampooned in 1705 and there were mutterings that he was dominated by his second wife, Catherine King daughter of a London alderman; at Worcester wags asked whether Talbot or his wife was the dean.¹³ The Non-juror Thomas Hearne regarded William Talbot as a ‘digamist’ for marrying a second time.¹⁴

Unlike some Whig clergy, Talbot was also highly regarded by Queen Anne (who had a distinct preference for Tory clergy) and he preached before her on a number of occasions. In 1714, on the Hanoverian succession, Talbot was made dean of the chapels royal and in March 1714/15 he was nominated to Bishop Burnet’s old see of Salisbury. There had been rumours that Bishop William Wake of Lincoln, one of the senior Whig bishops, was in line for Salisbury, but Lord Chancellor Cowper had spoken to George I on the day of Burnet’s death

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and Talbot was already promised the see. In embarrassment Cowper wrote to Wake: ‘not knowing your lordship’s thoughts concerning that bishopric, I immediately did what I could to help the Bishop of Oxford to it, knowing he had been under some disappointment.’¹⁵ What this disappointment was is not clear. It may be that he had had expectations to succeed as bishop of Worcester. This was suggested in 1710 in an anonymous poem, ‘The History of Seven’, which satirised Talbot and other Latitudinarian bishops: Burnet, Moore, Cumberland, Hall, Fleetwood, Trimnell and Wake. They were attacked as ‘false brethren’.¹⁶ Of Talbot it was written:

Oxford thy principles now are well known¹⁷

A Prelate fit sure to protect the gown

Can ever Rhedycina’s sons despair¹⁸

Of safeguard, in so good a pastor’s care

Or dread Geneva’s wolf, tho lately bold

E’re breaking in to pray upon the fold

Dost thou expect for this the old prophet’s see?¹⁹

No Charles went right, who first promoted thee²⁰

Thy former nuptials, whoso will but view²¹

Will scarce think, a thief then, could now prove true

But despite his earlier disappointment, on 23 April 1715 Talbot was formally installed as Bishop of Salisbury and resigned his deanery of Worcester. Surprisingly for a bishop who had been in such favour with Queen Anne, Talbot was also a firm favourite with George I and in 1721, when Nathaniel Crewe died, Talbot replaced him as bishop of Durham.²² Dr Mangey, the dean of Durham, greeted Talbot on his entry to the palatine-bishopric, emphasising Talbot’s noble birth and the good state of the diocese he was entering:

His Majesty with a good grace and great justice bestows this branch of ancient regalia upon one, whose services to himself have been so many and eminent, and who by descent from noble blood, and an entail of noble qualities, is so well qualified to manage the rights, and support the dignity of so high a station... We may venture to

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assure your Lordship (and to the steady vigilance of your two immediate predecessors it is owing) that in this see there are few defects to supply, as few tares of heresy and false doctrine to weed out, as few abuses deserving Episcopal correction, as in any other in the kingdom. Your Lordship comes now to preside over a laity well affected to our excellent Church and your Episcopal character; over a clergy orthodox and strictly conformable to our canons, articles and rubricks; and over a chapter who have hitherto been so happy as neither to feel the censure, nor incur the displeasure of their visitor.²³

Perhaps Mangey had an eye to Talbot’s churchmanship in so clearly reassuring him of the orthodoxy and conformity of the laity and clergy. Talbot remained a Revolutionary clergyman, committed to the settlement of 1689; in 1716, at the assize sermon at Salisbury, he defended the Revolution:

God raised up a deliverer for us, and by the safe and seasonable arrival of his late Majesty of Glorious memory among us, brought about the happy Revolution; to which however ungrateful people, ungrateful to God as well as man, vilify or condemn it, we under God, owe the enjoyment, not only of our Civil Rights, but of our Reform’d Establish’d Religion for Twenty-seven years.²⁴

Moreover he never lost the martial Revolutionary spirit; in the *Flying Post* for June 14, 1722 it was claimed that Talbot ‘appeared on horseback at a review in the King’s train, in a long habit of purple with jackboots, and a cocked hat and a black wig, tied behind like a military officer.’²⁵

In politics Talbot was a convinced Whig. In 1702, when there was an attempt by the Tories to introduce the first Occasional Conformity Bill, which would outlaw Dissenters from qualifying for office by occasional receipt of communion in the Church of England, few bishops wanted to join Archbishop Tenison in open opposition to the Bill. But Talbot’s public opposition to the Bill ‘proved decisive.’²⁶ Talbot was also committed to the Whig project of Union between England and Scotland, joining Trimnell, Burnet, Halifax, Wharton, Sunderland and Somers in managing the Bill through the House of Lords.²⁷ Some High Church Tories, like Nottingham, were concerned that Union with Scotland implied a

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sanctioning of Presbyterianism. Tenison took a more pragmatic line, and Talbot astutely replied that Union no more sanctioned Presbyterianism than a treaty with France sanctioned Catholicism. Before the meeting of the new Union Parliament in 1707, Talbot preached a sermon of thanksgiving in St Paul’s.²⁸ The sermon was a classic piece of Whig-Latitudinarian politico-theology. He compared the political Union with religious reunion of the Protestants; it was, he argued, a joyful cause of ‘divine favour.’ He adopted the Latitudinarian doctrine of ‘adiaphora’, that there were ‘indifferent things’ about which it was valueless to disagree, since they were not required for the salvation of souls.

In matters of small consequence, in Things Indifferent, or in speculative subjects, wise and good men may differ without prejudice to themselves, to each other, or to the Publick: But it is in matters of greater weight that relate to the civil or ecclesiastical polity, wherein the welfare of the publick is concerned, that this unity is to be preserved.²⁹

Talbot had adopted this principle used by fellow Latitudinarians Burnet and Tenison to argue that the Dissenters and Anglicans could re-unite because the principal causes of separation were adiaphora, and used it to argue that the Union of England and Scotland had some important consequences and other matters should be treated as adiaphora. Talbot argued that if some opposed the Union on minor or indifferent matters, they should keep their scruples to themselves and ‘suffer not their private opinions to give disturbance to the publick.’³⁰ The advantages of the Union, argued Talbot, were religious, political and economic; the unity of interest it established was that of ‘joint traders, though not equal in shares in one common stock; or as having their effects embark’d on one and the same bottom, upon the safety and prosperity whereof the advantage of every individual does depend.’ The Union would bring riches at home, safety from enemies abroad and the advancement of trade and manufacturing. Talbot cited the reigns of Edwards I, II and III as a time of unity between England and Scotland and one of military success also. British power would bring victories in the war with France. Whig government had enabled Britain ‘to maintain our credit so at home, that while our enemies mint bills difficultly pass at sixty percent discount, we... circulate our Exchequer

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bills at lower interest than is generally given.’ Talbot hoped that while the names of England and Scotland would be lost in that of Britain, so all parties and distinctions would also be lost in the Union.³¹

Following the Act of Union Talbot became a member of the group of Whig bishops which met to manage their party’s response to parliamentary business. The group included Bishops Burnet, Moore, Gibson, Trimnell, Willis and Chandler.³² The apogee of Talbot’s Whig activism came in 1710, during the Sacheverell trial. Henry Sacheverell was impeached in 1710 for preaching and publishing a sermon ‘On the Perils of False Brethren’ in which he had impugned the commitment of the Low Churchmen to the Church, and suggested that they were fellow travellers with Dissenters whose interests they sought to safeguard. In the course of the sermon Sacheverell also endorsed the High Church Tory doctrine of passive obedience of subjects to their rulers and implied that the Revolution of 1688 was invalid. The Whig government, which Sacheverell had also attacked in his sermon, could not let such an attack on the legitimacy of the regime go unchallenged, and Sacheverell was impeached for preaching sedition. It was during the impeachment that Talbot rose to speak against Sacheverell.³³ According to one historian Talbot, not a frequent speaker in the Lords, ‘truly distinguished himself’ during the speech.³⁴

In some ways, Talbot’s speech was a traditional recitation of Whig constitutional theory, derived from the Revolution of 1688, and most fully developed by Benjamin Hoadly.³⁵ He argued that government was designed for the good of society and that men should not be subject to the arbitrary will of their rulers; he also asserted that ‘in Holy Scripture... there is no specification of any particular one form of government.’ He acknowledged that there were scriptural texts that suggested obedience, such as ‘let every soul be subject to higher powers...’ –a text on which Hoadly, Blackall and Atterbury had recently crossed swords. However, Talbot denied that scripture indicated how far obedience should be taken, or whether there were any cases in which subjects could legitimately resist. But reason suggested that a child should not obey a mad parent, and history showed that Queen Elizabeth and King Charles I supported rebels in other countries. Talbot also made

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play with Atterbury for conceding that in extreme necessity people could defend themselves.

Thus far, Talbot had said little new, and admitted that ‘my Lords, I fear I tire you.’ But in turning to Sacheverell, Talbot made a dramatic assertion:

Passive obedience, I own, when truly stated is a truly Christian duty, a perpetual duty as to the obligation... [but] preachers do not usually, neglecting the presence of other duties of more constant practice, lay out their time and labour in fulfilling both pages of their discourse with earnest assertions and violent exhortations to the practice of an occasional duty, unless they have some near prospect of an occasion of the exercise of it.³⁶

If there was no intention to challenge Queen Anne’s right to the throne, Talbot asked, ‘is there any reason from the behaviour of her people that may justify this extraordinary and otherwise unreasonable zeal for this doctrine?’ Talbot conceded that Sacheverell’s deluded supporters were not Jacobites, but he suggested that Sacheverell himself was, and argued that ‘if clergymen may with impunity publicly in their sermons arraign and condemn the Revolution... it must sap the very foundations of our present establishment... and utterly destroy our future hopes in the Protestant succession.’³⁷ Talbot’s was indeed a powerful contribution, for while other bishops like Wake, Trimnell and Burnet argued from the same premises, all were known to reject the principle of passive obedience in favour of the subject’s right of resistance to their ruler. In contrast, Talbot had acknowledged the High Church principle of passive obedience, asserted by many Anglicans to be a key doctrine, but denied its universal application and argued that there were other stronger calls on duty and principle. While it seems likely that Talbot’s intervention did not secure the conviction of Sacheverell, his contribution earned him the admiration of Whigs and those who were committed to the Protestant succession.

In 1714, therefore, when the new Hanoverian regime sought a preacher at the coronation of George I, Talbot was an obvious choice. His sermon was redolent with Old Testament allusions to the providential nature of a ‘peaceable accession.’ Talbot also resorted to Whig theory tracing a providential succession through the Revolution of 1688, the reign of

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William III, the war against France and the failure of the Pretender to seize the throne.

Talking of the bishops he said:

We of this House who attend His sanctuary and wait at His altar should probably have been the first sufferers if the designs of a Popish pretender had prevailed... and as we are the more immediate sharers in this deliverance from it, I hope I may be allowed to express our grateful sense of the mercy in the votive benediction of the priests.³⁸

Almost two years later Talbot again raised himself into the pulpit before the King, this time in the Chapel of St James’s Palace, to celebrate the deliverance from the Pretender’s rebellion.

Again Talbot proclaimed it truly a providential deliverance, akin to St Paul’s deliverance from the beasts. Alluding to Britain as an elect nation, he claimed that he could recount several deliverances since the Revolution of 1688, when ‘the inundation was just breaking in upon us, and we were in such a kind of straight, as the Israelites at the Red Sea.’³⁹ He denounced the Pretender and his allies as bigots and idolaters against whom good Protestants stood firm ‘when they had all authority and power in their own hands.’⁴⁰ King George stood in succession to William III, who had established the Protestant kingdom and Queen Anne whose victorious forces had kept Catholicism at bay for so long. The suppression of the 1715 rising proved beyond doubt that ‘the present settlement... is the work of God’ achieved by the ‘superintendency of providence.’⁴¹

After the Hanoverian regime was secured, Talbot joined forces with the ultra-Low Church Whigs, who included his friend Lord Cowper. They sought to repeal the Test and Corporations Acts, which excluded Dissenters from the exercise of public office. In doing so, Talbot again earned the favour of the King.⁴² In 1717 Talbot also joined them in voting for the Bristol Workhouse Bill, which was a kite-flying exercise by Low Church Whigs. The Bill sought to exempt the Bristol Workhouse from the terms of the Test and Corporations Act and therefore permit Dissenters to hold posts there. If the measure obtained widespread support it might have led to wholesale repeal of the Acts. In voting with the radical Whig Latitudinarians, Talbot signalled his position on the extreme wing of the Low Church party.⁴³ Talbot’s appointment to Durham was a high water mark for the Whig Low Churchmen; it

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coincided with the preferment of his equally Low Church fellow Whigs, Benjamin Hoadly to Hereford, Charles Trimmell to Winchester and Richard Willis to succeed him at Salisbury.

III

If Talbot’s politics were those of an extreme Whig, often in accord with Low Church sympathies, many of his published sermons indicate that he shared the sort of Low Church sympathy for Dissent and a willingness to conciliate heterodox clergy that was usual for Latitudinarians. His first published sermon, preached on his entry to the deanery of Worcester in 1691, was a model of Whig Latitudinarianism. In an introductory letter he thanked the Mayor and Corporation for his reception, lauding them as ‘truer Englishmen and better Protestants than to be governed by the principles or examples of some... (who) strike at the foundation of our civil constitution and call in question the Authority of our Reformation...’⁴⁴ He also thanked them for not challenging his appointment. His sermon was a thorough proclamation of the right of the Revolution to displace James II and establishing the ‘safety and establishment of all that can be dear to us as men, Englishmen and Protestants: the security of our lives and liberties, of our civil rights and properties...’ James II, Talbot claimed, ‘breathes nothing but blood, fire and devastation; whose only glory is to make orphans and widows, to lay countries waste and cities in ashes and tinge their rivers with innocent gore.’ Talbot used biblical texts to argue that God had previously deposed rulers. He also asserted that such deliverance from James II placed a duty on Britons to avoid vice and lust. Talbot argued that only men and women and not nations could be punished in the afterlife; God punished nations with wars and famines. He contended that Britons had permitted James to ‘celebrate... idolatrous services in the most public and conspicuous places in the Kingdom’ and this meant that they owed a duty now to be peaceable, united and to eschew profanity, drunkenness and other forms of ill behaviour.⁴⁵ This latter synthesized Puritan doctrines of the unity of all Protestants with ideas of a Godly community in which the behaviour of Christians was regulated and sin was censured.

Less than a year later Talbot preached a sermon before Queen Mary. Despite her husband’s Calvinism, Queen Mary was a convinced Arminian. Talbot suggested that the

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‘humble meek, patient and charitable’ appeared to be the prey of atheists. But he argued that the free will to commit sin was the only means God used to prove faith and submission and that those who took advantage of it were judged in the life to come. ‘Truly God is loving to Israel. I am sure we of this Church and Nation have found him to be so,’ Talbot claimed, and asserted that good works and abandonment of sin was the only sure way to life everlasting. It was a sermon that argued for abandonment of sin and vice, one of the Queen’s favourite themes.⁴⁶ A similar theme was also advanced in 1707 in a sermon preached before Queen Anne. Talbot argued that God had ‘imprinted’ onto the minds of men and women ideas of good and evil; but he had done so in order to punish the disobedient and reward submission. Sin would always be found out and judged: ‘in vain does the adulterer watch for twilight to execute his filthy purposes; in vain does the riotous choose the night for his debaucheries; in vain does any sinner seek out the remotest and darkest corner for to act his villainies in.’ For, said Talbot, God was always before us and could not be evaded. Thus the route to salvation was to be soldiers of Christ and to follow the precepts of the Church.⁴⁷

There is other evidence of Talbot’s support for Low Church and even heterodox principles. In 1712 Talbot engaged with the issue of lay baptism. Lay baptism had long been an issue on which High and Low Churchmen did not agree. High Churchmen, with an elevated notion of the priesthood and the sacraments, took the view that, as a sacrament, baptism could only be conferred by a priest. Baptism by the laity, even *in extremis*, did not carry any validity. Low Churchmen, conversely, held that lay baptism might be irregular, but was as valid as that conferred by a priest. Archbishop Thomas Tenison, as the standard-bearer of Low Church views, strongly defended the case for lay baptism. In 1712 George Hickes, whom Talbot had displaced at Worcester, inspired Roger Laurence to publish *Lay Baptism Invalid*, whose argument was encapsulated in its title. William Talbot responded in his charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Oxford in 1712. He argued that the tradition and practice of the Church had long supported lay baptism and asked ‘how many thousands of our own Church must this doctrine [of priestly baptism] unChristian from the Reformation down?’ He also argued that people who had been in receipt of lay baptism had also been admitted to Holy

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Orders in the seventeenth century, and that King James I had supported lay and private baptism.⁴⁸ He made clear that he did not support irregular practices, and cited Whitgift, Bancroft, Hooker and Cosin as authorities that lay baptism was valid. Talbot appended to his *Charge* thirteen pages of evidence to defend his views on lay baptism.⁴⁹ Hickes responded to Talbot’s views with a tract entitled *The Bishop of Oxford’s Charge Consider’d*. To his horror, Talbot’s sermon was referred by the High Churchmen who dominated the Lower House of Convocation for consideration by a committee of Convocation. Worse still, many of the High Church members appeared to support Laurence’s and Hickes’s views. Archbishop Tenison sought and obtained the House of Bishops’ support for lay baptism, but could not get them to agree to circulate a statement that would quash the actions of the Lower House. Eventually the issue rumbled on without conclusion, other than to confirm Talbot as an opponent of High Church sacerdotalism.⁵⁰

Certainly Talbot disliked the idea of any shackles on his faith such as committees of Convocation sought to exercise. In an assize sermon preached at Salisbury in 1716 he claimed the glories of the Church of England to be that ‘we have the free use of the Bible in our own tongue; have no doctrines imposed on our faith, nor duties in our practice but what the Scriptures plainly teach.’⁵¹ This was almost a model of Latitudinarian emphasis on direct access to scripture and individual judgement. Talbot also championed the idea of rational religion, a key doctrine for Latitudinarians. In a sermon to the Lord Mayor of London and the governors of the hospitals of London in 1700, Talbot asserted:

So far am I from affronting Reason, that sovereign guide as ‘tis called, or from infringing its liberty of directing, even in the choice of religion, that I do freely acknowledge that a Religion which cannot be reasonably accounted for, is not fit for a Rational creature to own, nor worth his keeping...⁵²

In his charge to the clergy of Salisbury in 1716 Talbot urged them to maintain good relations with Dissenters: this was another Latitudinarian marker. He begged the clergy to avoid ‘hard language and bitter reflections’ toward Dissenters and ‘to treat them with love and gentleness’ and to make visits to them ‘to satisfy them that you intend nothing but their

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good.’ He exhorted them to promote unity and to ask Dissenters whether communion with the Church of England was forbidden by their faith. The passage took up a lengthy section of the charge and reflected traditional Latitudinarian emphasis on the recovery of Dissent to the Church.⁵³ Later in the charge he spoke further in defence of Dissenters and pointed out the debt Anglicans owed them for their support in 1688:

To fix odious marks of distinction on those... and whose personal characters for their brave appearing in defence of our Church in times of greatest danger, and learned vindicating of our Constitution against our enemies, and on all hands should entitle them to another sort of treatment from all that wish well to our established religion, to represent such as not hearty friends to the Church, but rather betrayers of her, is no light thing, nor will be found so one day.⁵⁴

He went on ‘I would touch this sore with a soft and compassionate hand’ and urged the clergy to sacrifice private interests for the peace of the Church. Talbot argued that the Church had enemies enough in Atheists, Deists, Papists, Socinians, freethinkers and the rest without attacking fellow Protestants.

Talbot’s sympathy for heterodox Low Churchmanship was also confirmed by his appointment of Thomas Rundle and Thomas Secker as his chaplains. Though Secker was emerging as an orthodox Anglican, his appointment as Talbot’s chaplain occurred soon after his conversion to Anglicanism from Nonconformity; indeed Secker had been raised and educated as a Dissenter, and Talbot was unlikely to have been able to predict Secker’s subsequent transition to orthodoxy.⁵⁵ Rundle was a very different case. While Secker began as a Dissenter and became an orthodox Anglican, Rundle was an Anglican who openly embraced heterodox notions of the Trinity. Rundle had associated with Samuel Clarke and thoroughly embraced his quasi-Arian views. Rundle had also introduced Bishop Talbot’s son, Edward, to William Whiston, who had been ejected from his chair at Cambridge for heterodox theology, and together Edward Talbot and Thomas Rundle joined Whiston’s Society for Primitive Christianity, an organisation so heterodox that a number of Latitudinarians, including Benjamin Hoadly, refused to have anything to do with it.⁵⁶ Rundle

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had also struck up a friendship with the Deist Thomas Chubb. Nevertheless after his chaplaincy Talbot appointed Rundle to a prebendal stall in Salisbury cathedral, to the archdeaconry of Wiltshire and to the treasurership of Salisbury. When he went to Durham Talbot appointed Rundle to a stall in that cathedral. Talbot’s support for Rundle lasted well into the 1720s and his proposed elevation to the episcopate in the 1730s was a compliment to Talbot’s son, who had become Lord Chancellor.⁵⁷ Rundle’s reputation for heterodoxy was so strong that Bishop Edmund Gibson led a revolt by the bishops who refused to consecrate Rundle, and Walpole, in humiliation, was forced to drop the idea.⁵⁸

Besides Rundle and Secker, William Talbot favoured Samuel Clarke, the heterodox rector of St James’s Piccadilly. Clarke’s *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* smacked to some of Arianism, and seemed to question the divinity of Christ, and accordingly the Lower House of Convocation had censured it. Like Benjamin Hoadly, William Talbot was keen to reward Clarke with some preferment in the diocese of Durham. Talbot, like Hoadly, hoped that Clarke would be prepared to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, but his refusal to do so meant that Talbot would not prefer him to a place in his diocese. Nevertheless it was widely assumed that Talbot held Clarkean heterodox views on the Trinity.⁵⁹ Certainly Clarke’s standing with Talbot was sufficiently high to be the cause of some embarrassment to the Bishop. In 1727 Clarke carelessly gave a testimonial to an ordinand whom he had met but did not know well. The ordinand obtained a title to a family living and Talbot agreed to ordain him largely on the recommendation of Clarke’s testimonial. In the event it turned out that the man was a fraud, with no degree and notorious in the north of England.⁶⁰

Talbot’s connections with and sympathy for heterodoxy seemed to be a natural consequence of his Latitudinarianism and Whig principles. Thus far his politics and theology made him unexceptional. Talbot’s Revolutionary Whig views were thoroughly consistent with his Low Church defence of the providential nature of the deliverance at the Revolution of 1688, the War of Spanish Succession, the succession of the House of Hanover and the defeat of the rebellion of 1715. Although Low Churchmen did not exercise a monopoly on

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providentialism,⁶¹ Talbot’s emphatic support of the reform of vice, the unity of Protestants and the consequences of sin suggest influences of Puritanism that were widely apparent among Low Churchmen.⁶² If anything, Talbot’s Low Churchmanship appeared to operate at the extreme of the spectrum that made it entirely plausible that he would flirt with the quasi-Arianism or Socinian views of Whiston, Clarke and Rundle. If Talbot’s theology had stopped at that, he would not merit attention at all and could be consigned to history as the archetype of a Whig Latitudinarian. But careful attention to Talbot’s published works shows that he was not simply a dyed-in-the-wool Latitudinarian. From time to time Talbot departed from consistent Low Church views and advanced views that placed him in the centre of orthodox Anglicanism, if not veering toward High Churchmanship.

IV

One of Talbot’s earliest sermons at odds with his Low Churchmanship was preached before the Queen at St James’s on Christmas day 1702: the title was *The Divinity of Christ Asserted*.⁶³ In it, he claimed that among the ‘highest and poorest’ the divinity of Christ was decried, but Talbot promised to ‘vindicate the Glory of His eternal God-Head.’ The denial of Christ’s divinity had begun in apostolic times, claimed Talbot, but had recently corrupted students so that now the heresy ‘walked bare-faced and at Noon-day.’ Talbot unequivocally declared that Christ was the ‘Son of God,’ the messiah, and that he raised the dead. He argued that Christ was eternal and, citing St John, controverted Socinus’s suggestion that, though divine, Christ was not co-eternal with God. Talbot declared Christ shared all God’s qualities: immutability, omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. He concluded that Christ’s divinity placed a duty on all Christians to cling to orthodox doctrines and the Church of England. In short, the sermon was a model of Trinitarian orthodoxy of the sort that Talbot’s friends Clarke and Rundle would have found problematic. This was not a passing phase: in his charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Oxford in 1712, Talbot also denounced Arian and Socinian doctrines in relation to the Trinity and called on the clergy to enforce ‘steadfast adherence to the doctrines of the Church.’⁶⁴ A.M.C. Waterman has argued that there was a clear connection between High Churchmanship and orthodox Christology, but this is at odds

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with Talbot’s position, which encompassed both Low Churchmanship and orthodox Christology.⁶⁵

Talbot’s charge of 1712 went further, however, in also asserting sacerdotal views reminiscent of High Churchmen. He claimed that the Church was independent of the State, an anti-Erastian view advanced by High Churchmen in the Convocation dispute of 1703-05 and in subsequent controversies. He also made strident claims for the Eucharist as a ‘proper sacrifice’ rather than the commemoralist view that Hoadly later adopted. Talbot’s charge also indicated that he regarded absolution as a sacrament, a controversial doctrine that even some High Churchmen considered too ‘high’ to be acceptable.⁶⁶ In his charge to the clergy of Salisbury in 1716 Talbot also made a strong plea for frequent celebration of the Eucharist in the most High Church sacramental terms:

You should press upon them [the laity] the obligations they are under to receive it... to keep them up in the memory of His unparalleled love and mercy in suffering his body to be broken and his blood to be shed on the Cross for the redemption of mankind.⁶⁷

In the same charge, Talbot advanced a High Church view of the priesthood. He emphasised the apostolic origins of the priesthood, and promised the clergy that God would aid them as he had his first apostles.⁶⁸ Talbot’s high view of the priesthood was derived from the apostolic succession and perhaps also reflected a defence against Roman Catholic and Non-juror jibes about the validity of the Church of England’s orders. In the Salisbury assize sermon of 1716 he said:

Our Bishops and Priests are true bishops and priests, who received imposition of hands from such as were qualified... those Holy Bishops, whom God was pleased to make use of for the Reformation of our Church did receive Orders from those that were of the Church of Rome; and from those blessed Reformers, our Bishops and Priests derive their succession.⁶⁹

Another of Talbot’s charges, that to the clergy of the Diocese of Durham in 1722, was similarly remarkable for apostolic claims. Talbot characterised the priesthood in the charge, claiming that the authority of a priest came from Christ himself and that it laid a duty on the

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clergy to pursue ‘our great and main business... to save souls.’⁷⁰ Such apostolicism, indicating that priests were in such a direct and close succession to Christ, was one of those doctrines long held dear by High Churchmen and directly contradicted by Low Churchmen. Talbot also spoke of the sacraments, again encouraging his clergy to remove the prejudice of the people against frequent attendance at Holy Communion, and not to be content with the canonical minimum of three a year. Paradoxically this was a theme he connected to the recovery of Dissenters to the Church; urging clergy to seek to recover Dissenters with a ‘spirit of meekness.’ But he went on ‘since they cannot prove it a sin to communicate with us they must acknowledge it to be a sin to separate from us.’⁷¹ Talbot proceeded to consider the actions of priests and urged them to set a pattern of meekness, to seek the Lord’s dispersed flock, to be diligent and to heal divisions.⁷² Above all, conformity and orthodoxy was what Talbot sought; he held that the clergy should publicly profess ‘all the doctrines of our Church, all her Articles of Faith’ and conform to her discipline and liturgy. In combining an apostolic view of the priesthood and a high view of the Eucharist with a desire to treat Dissenters kindly, Talbot was drawing on both High and Low Church attitudes and values.

Talbot’s equivocal churchmanship extended to applying balm to Non-jurors as much as to Dissenters. In December 1718, when Bishop Edmund Gibson proposed to Archbishop Wake that a circular letter should be issued including a defence of the Trinity and an attack on Catholics and Non-jurors, the idea was referred to senior bishops, including Talbot. Bishop Charles Trimmell was strongly in support, but Talbot

was in judgement against having any such letter at all, and if there was to be one he thought it should not fall on the friends of the government who had deserved well of it, though he did not think they had been discreet. He concluded by saying he would obey the orders he should receive though he did not like them.⁷³

The defence of the Trinity could not have aroused Talbot’s opposition; it was surely the divisiveness of an attack on Non-jurors that caused his anxiety.

Clearly William Talbot embraced High Church as well as Low Church views in his theology and ecclesiology, and this raises important questions about the terms themselves. The use of ‘High Church’ and ‘Low Church’ to delineate the thought of churchmen only emerged after the Revolution. The earliest recorded use of the term ‘High Church’ was in 1702, when Lady Pye reported that High Churchmen were elated at the death of William III.⁷⁴ In their first appearance in print, in *The True Character of a Churchman*, in 1702, the terms were clearly understood to be ‘party-names’ with all the ‘power and mischief’ that arose when the terms were used ‘ignorantly or designedly applied to wrong persons.’⁷⁵ In a reply, also published in 1702, it was clear that the terms were used as forms of abuse in a loose way, indeed the election of 1702 had seen ‘High Churchman’ and ‘Low Churchman’ used to attack opposing sides, but in none of these cases were the terms precisely and doctrinally defined.⁷⁶ Yet as the labels were beginning to be used, some writers struggled with clear definitions. Gilbert Burnet regarded them as political terms and argued that ‘those men who began now to be called the High Church party, had all along expressed a coldness, if not an opposition, to the present settlement.’⁷⁷ In September 1710 Joseph Addison, in satirical mood, but a no less noteworthy witness for that, devoted number 220 of the *Tatler* to the issue of what the terms meant. Addison considered whether High and Low Church represented a thermometer, but he decided that a linear measurement was inappropriate, facetiously marking the gradations between High and Low as more circular, gyrating around: ‘Ignorance-Persecution-Wrath-Zeal-Church-Moderation-Lukewarmness-Infidelity-Ignorance.’ Addison joked that he had taken his barometer to various coffee houses in London to measure the ecclesiastical pressure. But in a serious afterthought Addison concluded:

The terms High Church and Low Church as commonly used, do not so much denote a principle, as they distinguish a party. They are like words of battle, they have nothing to do with their original significance; but are only given out to keep a body of men together, and to let them know friends from enemies.⁷⁸

Addison’s comments were significant: there were clearly identifiable groups of friends that fuelled a sense of ‘party.’ But there were some who moved easily between these two groups.

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George Smalridge, for example, was a close friend and ally of Francis Atterbury, and joined him in the defence of Sacheverell in 1710, but he was also friendly with Samuel Clarke and William Whiston –who were feverishly attacked by Atterbury-- and as a consequence Smalridge sought to avoid their censure by the Lower House of Convocation. The complex network of friendships that operated within High and Low Church circles was reinforced by ties of patronage. But such ties could also be loosened; this is exemplified by Thomas Naish. Naish was a clergyman in Salisbury diocese and a protégé of Gilbert Burnet; however, Naish fell out with his patron, and subsequently abandoned Latitudinarianism and joined the High Church bloc in Convocation. Naish’s move may well have been a consequence of his disappointment at the hands of Burnet over Church preferment. Thus High and Low Churchmanship may have been badges of connection and relationship, and consequently indicative of emotion and feeling as much as of principle and doctrine. But in the same way that affiliations were permeable, clergy like Talbot sometimes mixed and matched their doctrines, rather than consistently and invariably holding to one set of friends and principles.

William Talbot was one of the earliest denouncers of the division and consistently denied the value of the terms ‘High Church’ and ‘Low Church’. In a sermon preached to the House of Lords in 1704, Talbot rejected the notion that it was legitimate for High and Low Churchmen to attack each other. He referred to

The distinction of High and Low Churchmen: such as have never separated from her [the Church of England], but lived in constant communion with her, nay some who have adorn’d her communion by their exemplary lives, edified her members by their constant and successful labours in the word and doctrine, defended her Constitution, her doctrines, discipline and worship, against all opposers, in their unanswerable discourses and writings, been confessors to her in times of danger, and who, we cannot in charity doubt it, would be ready, if call’d, to die martyrs for her, have been traduced and stigmatised as enemies and betrayers of her. How sad effects this wicked practice has produced is too melancholic a reflection to dwell on.⁷⁹

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In his Durham charge of 1722 Talbot also lamented the division of High and Low

Churchmen. He commented that ‘this unhappy division of High and Low is applied to the pastors and governors of the Church!’⁸⁰ Some similar claims to reject the division cannot be taken too seriously: even Henry Sacheverell referred to the ‘knavish distinction of High and Low Church.’⁸¹ One contemporary writer asserted with good reason that ‘all condemn the distinction of High and Low Church, when at the same time they scruple not to defend or plead the cause of one side or the other.’⁸² But it is clear that Talbot did not just reject the easy division into High and Low Church, but also the narrow and obscure controversies that gave rise to them. In his charge to the clergy of Salisbury in 1716 he admonished his clergy on preaching:

The subjects should generally be practical; the handling of the controversial points does not often do service in ordinary congregations, and the entering of the abstruser mysteries of our religion, especially attempting to explain them frequently does mischief.⁸³

It was a theme to which he returned in the climax of the charge: ‘mark, I beseech you, those who would cause divisions amongst us, and offences contrary to the Christian doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ.’⁸⁴

Talbot then launched into a direct consideration of the High Church-Low Church division. It was, he argued, fomented by Catholics whose ‘policy is to break us into parties and set each party against... the other.’ To Talbot’s pain ‘Churchmen have been prevailed on to fall out with Churchmen’ and further:

To believe and profess all the doctrines of our Church, all her articles of faith, to endeavour to observe all her Rules of Practice, to conform and submit to her Discipline, to join in her worship, to keep constant communion with her in all her Holy Offices and Administrations without ever once separating from us, is not, in some persons opinions enough to denominate a man a Churchman, at most, will give him but the character of a Low one.⁸⁵

In the same year, at his assize sermon at Salisbury, Talbot developed this view:

[A] duty required of us is carefully to avoid all factions and divisions among ourselves... [and not to be] a society distracted with parties and factions, though they had no common enemy to deal with their mutual animosities... My brethren, our strength under God, lies in our unity... Let all distinguishing names, particularly that ridiculous and senseless one of High Church and Low Church, be forever forgotten. We all believe the same Articles of faith, agree in the same rules of practice, join the same worship, communicate in the same sacraments, submit to the same discipline; what foundation is there then for a distinction of members of this Church that has any difference to support it? Let us convince our enemies that we truly love and value the Church of England and prefer her safety to any private considerations... that whatever little differences there may be among us as to other matters we are resolved to unite as one man in defence of that.⁸⁶

A year later he returned to the theme in a charity school sermon in which he argued that ‘as Christians we are much more nearly related to each other than we are by nature; by nature we are all brethren, but as Christians, we all are members of one body.’⁸⁷

Talbot’s rejection of the simple division into Low and High Church is born out by other evidence. Gerald Straka claims that ‘within a few years the Church split into ‘low’ and ‘high’ largely as a result of the Revolution.’⁸⁸ In fact the Church split on the issue of a divine or limited monarchy, and few other theological doctrines followed from such conceptions of monarchy.⁸⁹ Before the Revolution there was no division on the issue of the nature of monarchy among those who invited William of Orange to come to England. Nor was there division between those who wrote encouraging Dissenters to return to the Church of England: the *Collection of Cases, and other Discourses, lately written to recover dissenters to the Communion of the Church of England, by some divines of the City of London*, published in 1688, contained articles written by those who after 1689 found themselves categorised as High and Low Churchmen. Such collaboration between High and Low Churchmen continued after the Revolution, in the SPCK and the Society for the Reformation of Manners. Craig

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Rose and Jeremy Gregory have shown, for example, how hospitals and charity schools were arenas in which High and Low Churchmen could meet, cooperate and engage with each other without the appearance of damaging divisions.⁹⁰ Moreover even on the core issue of a divine or limited monarchy there were those who dithered and avoided faction and disunity: William Sherlock, expected to refuse the oaths to William and Mary, finally swore them on the last day allowed by law to do so. Similarly, Robert Nelson, a Non-juror in 1690, was to return to the Church of England before his death.

Historians have assumed a greater solidity and exclusivity in Church parties than appeared to be the case to contemporaries. In Smalridge’s case an otherwise hard-line Tory High Churchman seemed to conciliate heterodoxy and was suspected of Arian views.⁹¹ In contrast, Talbot, an unquestionable Whig Latitudinarian, espoused staunch Trinitarian Christology, Eucharistic sacerdotalism and an apostolic view of the priesthood that would have impressed the most hardened High Churchman. Both Talbot and Smalridge held powerful political affiliations that seemed to underscore their predominant doctrinal positions, and perhaps appeared to make their churchmanship more cut and dried than was the case. Certainly Talbot’s doctrinal positions undermine the idea that ‘High Church’ and ‘Low Church’ parties were clearly differentiated into exclusive ecclesiological and doctrinal positions.

Talbot did not simply ‘flip-flop’ inconsistently between two opposing polarities. As Talbot and others demonstrate, historians need to reconceptualise the Church parties of the post-Revolution period. But if the church parties are to be reconceptualised, it must be around the core Anglican beliefs that both High and Low Churchmen shared: Trinitarianism, a strong pastoral ministry, the importance of the Eucharist, moral reform and renewal, and even episcopacy. These were features of Anglicanism on which even Benjamin Hoadly and Francis Atterbury would agree. A shared heritage also united Anglicans. John Leng, who taught Hoadly at Cambridge, expressed it best when he argued that, though not flawless, the Church of England came closest to primitive conceptions of an ideal Church.⁹² This consensus was a centripetal force which held High and Low Churchmen within the Church. Those features on

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which they disagreed were a patchwork fringe of *adiaphora*, the indifferent things which produced much sound and fury but signified nothing.

While Talbot’s core principles of Whig Revolution religio-politics, Puritan-inspired Protestantism, strong Trinitarianism and high-flown sacerdotalism appear to be contradictory, there is in fact no paradox in holding all these views. The principal intellectual consequence of the Revolution of 1688, with the subsequent Toleration Act, was that doctrinal strictures were loosened. As a result of such loosened ties, Low Churchmen tended to pay attention to Dissent because it represented the greatest challenge to the Church; but there was no reason why the same latitude afforded to Protestants who had scruples about episcopacy and liturgy could not be afforded to those who had a high view of the sacraments. Indeed Hoadly’s debate with Edmund Calamy in 1703-05 on the reunion of Dissent with the Church of England is predicated on the same foundations as Talbot’s Latitudinarian sacerdotalism. The Revolution of 1688 had made it more, rather than less, likely that churchmen could combine core Anglican beliefs with diverse and divergent views. And in many cases they clearly did. Evidence of churchmen who diverged from standard perceptions of homogeneity in High Church or Low Church thought increases in direct ratio to the examination of them. G.A.J. Rogers’s study of John Locke suggests that, however much of a radical he is regarded by historians, his philosophy existed within a conservative framework.⁹³ Robert Cornwall has shown that Gilbert Burnet, who was, like Talbot, an archetype of Whig Latitudinarianism, was a stalwart advocate of an elevated view of the pastoral disciplines of the Church and of the clergy.⁹⁴ Edmund Gibson was able to embrace both Whig erastianism and High Church respect for canon law. Daniel Waterland, regarded by his biographer as ‘a study in orthodoxy’, was on the one hand a High Church Trinitarian and sacramentalist and on the other, a Whig who was sympathetic to Dissent with a strong preference for reason over revelation.⁹⁵ William Wake, a strong Whig Low Churchman, found himself in 1717-18 moving to a High Church position on the issue of the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts; his opposition to repeal led to his eclipse as the leader of the bishops in the House of Lords.⁹⁶ Jeffrey Chamberlain’s study of the Sussex clergyman, Thomas Curteis,

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also confirms that an otherwise tolerant Latitudinarian who was sympathetic to Dissent could also hold a stern opposition to Deism and a zealous pursuit of those who were heterodox in Christology.⁹⁷ In short there was no clearly delineated doctrines that so easily differentiated High and Low Churchmen. Thus Talbot espoused views from both parts of the Church, and his pluralist views shed light on the wider eighteenth century Church. It explains how large numbers of clergy, who were often held to be predominantly High Church and Tory after 1688, were able to embrace the Low Church Whig regime of the Hanoverians without turning to Jacobitism. Moreover those Churchmen who identified themselves as exclusively and homogenously Low Church or High Church were perhaps the exception rather than the rule.

¹ George Every, *The High Church Party, 1688-1718*, London 1956. Edward Carpenter, *Thomas Sherlock*, London 1936; idem, *Thomas Tenison*, London 1948; idem, *The Protestant Bishop*, London 1956; A. Tindal Hart, *William Lloyd 1627-1717*, London 1952; idem, *The Life and Times of John Sharp, Archbishop of York*, London 1949; Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson*, Oxford 1926; idem, *William Wake*, 2 vols. Cambridge 1957; W. M. Spellman, *The Latitudinarians and the Church of England, 1660-1700*, Athens, Georgia 1993; Donald Spaeth, *The Church in An Age of Danger; Parsons and Parishioners, 1660-1740*, Cambridge 2000.

² John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution*, Cambridge 1989, 92.

³ P. Ihalainen, *The Discourse on Political Pluralism in Early Eighteenth-Century England*, Helsinki 1999.

⁴ William Gibson, ‘George Smalridge and the Definition of Church Parties, 1700-1720’ in William Gibson and Robert Ingram (eds), *Religion, Politics and Identity in Britain 1660-1832*, Aldershot 2004, 43-61; G. Sanna, ‘How Heterodox was Benjamin Hoadly?’ in Gibson and Ingram, *Religion, Politics and Identity*, 61-81; William Gibson, *The Enlightenment Prelate, Benjamin Hoadly 1676-1761*, Cambridge 2004.

⁵ Roger Lund, ‘Introduction’ in Roger Lund (ed), *The Margins of Orthodoxy, Heterodox Writing and Cultural Response, 1660-1730*, Cambridge 1995, 1-29.

⁶ J.G.A. Pocock, ‘Within the Margins: The Definitions of Orthodoxy’ in Lund, *The Margins of Orthodoxy*, 34-53.

⁷ A.M.C. Waterman ‘The Nexus between Theology and Political Doctrine’ in K. Haakonssen (ed), *Enlightenment and Religion: Rational Dissent in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Cambridge 1996, 193-218.

⁸ See for example, DNB entry for Talbot.

⁹ Joyce M. Horn & D.S. Bailey (eds), *John Le Neve: Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857*, V: *Bath and Wells Diocese*, London 1979, 3.

¹⁰ Joyce M. Horn (ed), *John Le Neve: Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1541-1857*, VII: *Ely, Norwich, Worcester*, London 1992, 111.

¹¹ Charles J. Abbey, *The English Church and its Bishops 1700-1800*, London 1887, i, 157.

¹² William Stubbs, *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*, Oxford 1858.

¹³ Hart, *William Lloyd*, 196.

¹⁴ F. H. Ellis (ed.), *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, New Haven 1975, vii, 416. The widowers Bishops Burnet Hoadly and Moore had also taken second wives without attracting such censure.

¹⁵ Sykes, *William Wake*, ii, 100-101.

¹⁶ Ellis, *Poems on Affairs of State*, vii, 415-6.

¹⁷ Talbot had just published his speech on the Sacheverell trial; he justified resistance on the grounds of self-preservation. Thomas Hearne called it ‘a most childish, pitiful, illiterate and indeed malicious and republican Whiggish libel.’

¹⁸ Rhedycina is a latinisation of the Welsh for Oxford ‘Rhydychen,’ a nod at Talbot’s Welsh ancestry.

¹⁹ The ‘Old Prophet’ was William Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester.

²⁰ A reference to Talbot’s first preferment of Burghfield, Berks, from Charles, Duke of Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury went ‘wrong’ by supporting Williams III and came ‘right’ by voting for Sacheverell’s acquittal.

²¹ A reference to the fact that Talbot married twice.

²² It was asserted by the town of Sunderland that Talbot had never resided in his bishopric since the reign of Queen Anne, though of course he was not appointed to the see until eight years after her death: Sykes, *Edmund Gibson*, 213.

²³ Quoted in C. E. Whitting, *Nathaniel, Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham 1674-1721*, London 1940, 311.

²⁴ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of Sarum on Sunday, July 22, 1716, at the Assizes held there*, London 1716, 21-22.

²⁵ Quoted in Abbey, *The English Church and its Bishops*, i, 157.

²⁶ Geoffrey Holmes, *The Trial of Dr Sacheverell*, London 1973, 40.

²⁷ Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, London 1838, 851.

²⁸ Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison*, 393-4

²⁹ William Talbot, *A sermon preach'd before the Queen at the cathedral church of St. Paul, on May the first, 1707. Being the day appointed by her Majesty for a general thanksgiving for the happy union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland...*, London 1707, 5-6.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*, passim.

³² Clyve Jones & Geoffrey Holmes (eds), *The London Diaries of William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle, 1702-1718*, Oxford 1985, 18, 97, 668.

³³ It has been estimated that Talbot together with Bishop Burnet and Lord Haversham spoke for about two and a half hours. Jones and Holmes, *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 97.

³⁴ Holmes, *Trial of Dr Sacheverell*, 216. Despite his rare speeches, Talbot was an assiduous attender at the House: William M. Marshall, ‘The Dioceses of Hereford and Oxford, 1660-1760,’ in Jeremy Gregory and Jeffrey S. Chamberlain (eds), *The National Church in Local Perspective*, Woodbridge 2003, 197-223 at 209.

³⁵ Gibson, *Enlightenment Prelate*, passim,

³⁶ *The Bishop of Oxford, his Speech in the House of Lords on the 1st Article of the Impeachment of Dr Henry Sacheverell*, London 1710, 11.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-16.

³⁸ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached at the Coronation of King George in the Abbey Church of Westminster, October 20th 1714*, London 1714, 29-30.

³⁹ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preach'd before the King at St James's Chapel on Thursday, June 7. 1716. Being the day of Publick Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for Suppressing the Late Unnatural Rebellion...*, London 1716, 19.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 23.

⁴¹ Ibid., 27, 28.

⁴² Sykes, William Wake, ii, 117. Jones and Holmes, *The London Diaries of William Nicolson*, 704.

⁴³ Ibid., 679.

⁴⁴ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached at the Cathedral Church of Worcester upon the Monthly Fast Day, September 16 1691*, London 1691, n.p.

⁴⁵ Ibid., passim.

⁴⁶ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached before the Queen at Whitehall upon Friday the 26th of Febr. 1691/2*, London 1692, passim.

⁴⁷ William Talbot, *The Duty and Advantage of Setting God Always Before Us, A Sermon Preached before the Queen... the Second of March 1706/7*, London 1707, passim.

⁴⁸ William Talbot, *The Bishop of Oxford's Charge to the Clergy of His Diocese at the Visitation in the Year 1712*, London 1712, 13.

⁴⁹ Ibid., passim.

⁵⁰ Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison*, 315-316

⁵¹ Talbot, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of Sarum... at the Assizes held there*, 22.

⁵² William Talbot, 'The Truth of the Christian Religion Asserted, in A Sermon Preached before the Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor of London, the Alderman and Governors of the several hospitals of the City of London at St Bridget's Church on Easter-Monday, 1700,' in W. Talbot, *Twelve Sermons Preached on several subjects and occasions by the Rt Revd Father in God, Wm Talbot...* London 1731, 82.

⁵³ William Talbot, *The Bishop of Sarum’s Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese at his Primary Visitation, Anno 1716*, London 1717, 21-23.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 41.

⁵⁵ For which see Robert Ingram, ‘Nation, Empire, and Church: Thomas Secker, Anglican Identity, and Public Life in Georgian Britain, 1700-1770’, unpubl. PhD diss. University of Virginia, 2003. Dr Ingram has argued that in the 1720s Secker was moving rapidly toward orthodox Christology.

⁵⁶ John Hunt, *Religious Thought in England from the Reformation to the end of the last century*, London 1873, iii, 20, 170.

⁵⁷ At that time Rundle had been called ‘the Bishop of Durham’s own.’ Sykes, *Edmund Gibson*, 158.

⁵⁸ For the Rundle appointment and its consequences see William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord*, London 2001, 89-90.

⁵⁹ Stephen H. Cassan, *Lives and Memoirs of the Bishops of Sherborne and Salisbury*, Salisbury 1824, 194

⁶⁰ William Whiston, *Historical Memoirs of the Life of Dr Samuel Clarke. Being a Supplement to Dr Sykes’s and Bishop Hoadley’s Account...*, London 1730, 87.

⁶¹ John Spurr, “‘Virtue, Religion and Government’: The Anglican Uses of Providence.” in Tim Harris, Paul Seaward and Mark Goldie, (eds), *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England*, Oxford 1990, 29-47.

⁶² *A Collection of Cases, and other Discourses, lately written to recover dissenters to the Communion of the Church of England, by some divines of the City of London*, London 1718.

⁶³ William Talbot, *The Divinity of Christ Asserted, A Sermon Preached before the Queen, at St James’s on Christmas Day, 1702*, London 1702.

⁶⁴ Talbot, *The Bishop of Oxford’s Charge to the Clergy of His Diocese*, 8.

⁶⁵ Waterman, ‘Nexus’.

⁶⁶ Talbot, *The Bishop of Oxford’s Charge to the Clergy of His Diocese*, 8, 9, 10.

⁶⁷ Talbot, *The Bishop of Sarum’s Charge*, 17

⁶⁸ Ibid., 33-34.

⁶⁹ Talbot, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of Sarum... at the Assizes held there*, 7.

⁷⁰ William Talbot, *A Letter from the Bishop of Durham with a Charge to the clergy of his Diocese, Anno 1722*, London 1722, 8-11.

⁷¹ Ibid., 21-22.

⁷² The only exception to the latter was Catholics, who Talbot clearly felt were pathologically divisive: *ibid.*, 40.

⁷³ Quoted in Sykes, *William Wake*, ii, 165.

⁷⁴ *HMC, 15th Report*, iv, 26.

⁷⁵ Anon., *The True Character of a Churchman*, London 1702, *passim*.

⁷⁶ Anon., *The Character of a Low-Churchman*, London 1702.

⁷⁷ Gilbert Burnet, *A History of My Own Time*, x vols, London 1823, vi, 249.

⁷⁸ *Tatler*, No. 220, September 5, 1710.

⁷⁹ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled in the Abbey-Church of Westminster on Wednesday January 19, 1703/4, being the Fast Day appointed for the Imploring of a Blessing from Almighty God upon Her Majesty and her Allies engaged in the Present War...*, London 1704, 21.

⁸⁰ Talbot *Charge to the Clergy of Durham*, 40-41.

⁸¹ H. Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren...*, London 1709, 19

⁸² Anon., *An Antidote Against Rebellion, or the Principles of the Modern Politician, Examined and Compar’d with the description of the Last Age by the Right Honourable the Earl of Clarendon*, London 1704, 23.

⁸³ Talbot, *The Bishop of Sarum’s Charge*, 14.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 39.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 40-41.

⁸⁶ Talbot, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of Sarum... at the Assizes held there*, 27-29.

⁸⁷ William Talbot, *A Sermon Preached at the Parish Church of St Sepulchre, June 13th 1717, being Tuesday in Whitsun Week, at the Anniversary Meeting of the Children educated at the Charity Schools in the cities of London and Westminster*, London 1717, 17.

⁸⁸ Gerald M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688*, Wisconsin 1962, 125.

⁸⁹ Best expressed in *The Grand Problem Briefly Discussed, or Considerations of the True Nature and Limits of Obedience and Submission to Governours with Respect to the Different Forms of an Absolute and Limited Monarchy*, London 1690.

⁹⁰ Craig Rose ‘London’s Charity Schools, 1690-1730’ *History Today*, xl, no.3, March 1990, 17-23, and also ‘Politics and the London royal Hospitals 1683-92’ in L. Granshaw and R. Porter (eds), *The Hospital in History*, London 1989, 117-143 at 137. Jeremy Gregory, *Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828, Archbishops of Canterbury and the Diocese*, Oxford 2000, 242-3.

⁹¹ W. Gibson, ‘George Smalridge...’ in Gibson and Ingram, *Religious Identities*, 48-61.

⁹² Gibson, *Enlightenment Prelate*, 46.

⁹³ G.A.J. Rogers, ‘John Locke: Conservative Radical’ in Lund, *The Margins of Orthodoxy*, 97-108.

⁹⁴ Robert Cornwall (ed), *Bishop Burnet’s Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, Lewiston USA 1997.

⁹⁵ R. T. Holtby, *Daniel Waterland 1683-1740 A Study in eighteenth century Orthodoxy*, Carlisle 1966, passim.

⁹⁶ Sykes, *William Wake*, passim.

⁹⁷ Jeffrey S. Chamberlain, ‘The Limits of Moderation in a Latitudinarian Apologist: or High Church Zeal in a Low Churchman Discovered’, in Lund (ed), *The Margins of Orthodoxy*, 195-215.